

PERMANENT UNDER
E.R.

2 JAN 1984

SECRETARY OF STATE

Mr [REDACTED]

Covering [REDACTED]

SPR [REDACTED]

(153)

cc Mr Partridge
Mr Hilary [REDACTED]

Content
[Signature]
20/1

GUIDELINES FOR SPECIAL BRANCHES

In your note of 20 January to Mr Partridge about APRs you mentioned that Sir Brian would like to see a timetable agreed for the SB guidance as soon as possible.

2. For Mr Partridge's benefit perhaps I could recall that the decision not to fix a specific timetable was taken at a meeting which Sir Brian held on 22 April 1983 and was recorded in your note of 26 April. That was of course against the background of no public pressure and relatively little interest by the Opposition in Special Branches. Since then the climate has changed markedly.

3. I held a second meeting of the group which has been discussing new guidelines on 3 November. The membership includes Ken Oxford, Colin Hewett, [REDACTED] Sys Officer [REDACTED] and a representative of SHHD. Because of the absence of a timetable I gave the Security Service until 9 January to complete the work which was commissioned from them at that meeting. This has not yet arrived, but it is promised in the near future.

4. By the time I leave on 17 February or very shortly thereafter I hope that we will have sent a draft of the guidelines to ACPO for formal clearance: there is really no more work to be done by the small group. SHHD should consult ACPO(S) at about the same time. From previous experience it is likely to take up to three months to secure ACPO's agreement because of the relatively infrequent meetings of their committees. I suggest that that time is used to show the draft guidelines to the Home Secretary to see whether he has any comments of such significance that they should be discussed with the Security Service and/or fed into the ACPO machinery. Time will be saved by consulting ACPO and the Home Secretary simultaneously.

5. This proposed programme of work should enable the new guidelines to be issued in early June.

F4 Division
26 January 1984

J G PILLING [REDACTED]